



City of Columbia
Business License Office
PHONE: 573-874-7378
Email: business.license@como.gov

701 East Broadway (65201)
Mail: P. O. Box 6015
Columbia, MO 65205-6015
FAX: 573-874-7761

Business License Application Help Sheet

According to the licensing ordinance, one act constitutes doing business, and therefore, a license is required. All businesses (including one-day, seasonal, part time and home occupation) must obtain a business license to conform to the licensing ordinance of the City of Columbia.

Information to assist you with starting a business in Missouri may be obtained from the Missouri Secretary of State at www.sos.mo.gov and the Missouri Business Portal website at www.business.mo.gov. Contact the Missouri Office of Equal Opportunity for certification as a MBE (Minority Business Enterprise) or WBE (Woman Owned Business Enterprise) at 573-751-8130 and online at www.oeo.mo.gov.

- 1) Fill out the application form completely. If you leave blanks or fail to provide all required documentation, the licensing process may be delayed. Fees and gross receipts are confidential.
- 2) Applications must be accompanied by a \$30.00 **application fee**.
- 3) The **investigation fee** covers the cost of a criminal record check on the business license applicant and is required at the time of application.
- 4) The **license fee** is based on the annual gross receipts of the business. New businesses must project their first year's earnings when computing the license fee. The schedule follows:

Total annual gross receipts less than \$25,000 \$15.00
Total annual gross receipts between \$25,000 and \$100,000 \$25.00
Total annual gross receipts over \$100,000 \$.25 per thousand -
(multiply the number of thousands by .25) up to a maximum of \$3,000,000 or fee of \$750.
Example: Gross receipts of \$200,000 - Multiply 200 by .25 to determine the license fee of \$50.00.

- 5) **The fiscal year for business licenses begins on July 1 and ends on June 30.** Businesses opening at anytime during this period are asked to estimate their gross receipts to the end of this fiscal period.
- 6) If you are selling/serving food or drink, please contact the Environmental Health Division of the Public Health and Human Services Department at 874-7346. Annual **food inspection fees** are based on the annual gross receipts of the business as follows:

annual gross receipts under \$250,000 \$185.00
annual gross receipts between \$250,000 and \$750,000 \$260.00
annual gross receipts over \$750,000 \$480.00

Make checks payable to the CITY OF COLUMBIA

- 7) Businesses that have retail sales must obtain a **Missouri State Sales Tax** license issued by the Missouri Department of Revenue in Jefferson City, at 573-751-5860 or online at www.dor.mo.gov
- 8) If you are required to have a Missouri state sales tax number, you may also have to obtain a **Boone County Merchant's License**. Questions about this license may be directed to the County Collectors Office, Boone County Government Center, 8th & Ash, Columbia, MO (573) 886-4295 or 886-4285.

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- 9) If issuance of your business license is dependent upon compliance with fire codes, the City of Columbia **Fire Department** may be contacted at 573-874-7556 to obtain information or request an appointment.
- 10) **Proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance**, in the form of a Certificate of Insurance, must be provided by all construction industry businesses with 1 or more employees. If you are a sole proprietor or partner in a partnership with no employees, or if you have filed a Notice of Employer's Exemption with the MO Division of Workers' Compensation Division, you must complete and have notarized the Affidavit of Exemption for Workers' Compensation form which we will provide to you.
- 10) Registration under the State of Missouri **Fictitious Name Law** can be accomplished through the Secretary of State's office in Jefferson City at 573-526-6829 or their website at www.sos.mo.gov.
- 11) If your business premise has an alarm system, please refer to Sections 13-254 through 13-260 of the City Code of Ordinances concerning reporting requirements and false alarm administrative fees, or visit the website at www.gocolumbiamo.com/ColumbiaCodeofOrdinances or call 573-874-7400.
- 12) Some businesses must comply with additional ordinance requirements before a license can be issued, as listed below.
- a) Plumbers - Contact Building & Site Development Division at 874-7474 for trade license requirements. See (9) above for workers' comp requirements. A surety bond in the amount of \$10,000, executed on the City's bond form, accompanied by a Power of Attorney is also required.
 - b) Electricians - File certificate of liability insurance. Contact Building & Site Development Division at 874-7474 for trade license requirements. See (9) above for workers comp requirements.
 - c) Mechanical (HVAC) - Contact Building & Site Development Division at 874-7474 for trade license requirements. See (9) above for workers comp requirements.
 - d) Canvassers/solicitors - Must obtain an additional solicitor's permit (\$20.00) from the Business License Office and provide a permission letter from business owner/employer.
 - e) Security and armed guard companies must provide a certificate of insurance showing coverage. Armed guards must pass a safety and firearms skills test administered by the Columbia Police Department (573) 874-7404.
 - f) * Pest control - Post a \$1,000 surety bond and provide a copy of your Missouri State Applicator's License (573-751-2462).
 - g) Gun shops (firearm and explosives dealers) must provide proof of inspection by the Columbia Police Department.
 - h) Handyman - A handyman business cannot perform electrical, plumbing or mechanical work requiring a professional license or make changes to buildings that require a building permit.

13) **If your business location is inside the City limits and changes will be made to the building, you must obtain a Building Permit. To inquire about a Building Permit or whether your location is zoned for your intended business use, contact the Building & Site Development Division at 573-874-7474.**

If structural changes will occur at your business location, a Building Permit may be required prior to the Building & Site Development Division's approval of your business or liquor license. The required construction documents for a Building Permit shall be of sufficient clarity to indicate the location, nature and extent of the work proposed, and show in detail that it will conform to the provisions of the Codes and relevant laws, ordinances, rules and regulations. If the nature of the proposed work is such that compliance with the applicable International Building, Residential, Plumbing, Mechanical, Fire, Property, Energy Conservation and Electrical Codes and regulations is not easily and unequivocally verifiable, a Registered Design Professional must prepare the documents.

- 14) All businesses must abide by all laws and regulations, including zoning, fire codes and health directives. Failure to comply could result in suspension or revocation of the business license.